3: Janashia 1-5 (ca. 1900) 1937 RI3 Abkhas RI3
Adzvibzha

4. *The Gathering of Medicinal Herbs*

796 On Maundy Thursday, young maidens, led by old women, go
[278 into a forest early before the dawn, to gather medicinal herbs. They
784] must neither converse nor look back. When they dig out the herb, they throw salt into the soil, murmuring "*Àdgilə-dedop'al, bəkhwə̀ bàh'eyt*, the Queen-Earth, we have returned to thee thy share".
757 The following herbs are considered as particularly healing: (*a*) *ajmshyə̀-rshwə̀ga, Arum albispatum*,[1] literally denoting: *ajmshyə̀*, eyebrow; *ashwə̀ga*, "that with which they paint (a paint)"; it is used against diphtheria and scarlet fever; (*b*) *aztqyil* or *abgar ləmha, Aristolochia pontica*[1] (birthwort); the second Abkhasian term denotes, literally, "jackal's ear," used against erysipelas (St. Anthony's fire); and (*c*) *ajaqwa*, veratrum, according to Tchubinov (Geo. *Kharis-dzira*).
796 Having finished gathering, they return home in silence and without looking back.

Maundy Thursday is called by the Abkhasians *tchatchkhadə̀l*, derived, in all probability, from the Megrelian *tsashkha didi*, "the great Thursday."

5. *Jaja*[2]

796 On Maundy Thursday the Abkhasians offer a sacrifice to the
782 goddess of fruitfulness (of husbandry and horticulture) called *Jaja*.
776 For this occasion the Abkhasian women prepare all sorts of lenten
241] dishes, taking care always to include a pumpkin. The dishes are placed outside the house, in a corn-field, the offering to *Jaja* being accompanied by a supplication as follows: "The great *Jaja*! We have done all that was required of us, and have made the customary offering. We therefore humbly entreat thee to show thy bounty towards us and grant us a good harvest in the field and in the kitchen garden!" As I have stated before, the Abkhasians have no set prayer formulas, and each prays as best he can.

As always, the offering is left for a few minutes wherever it was placed, and the supplicants stand before it, and watch with emotion how the spirit of the goddess invisibly satiates herself with the gifts of men! Needless to say they themselves consume the "remains".

796 As I have already remarked, there are two Abkhasian gods of
241 fruitfulness: the god *Andə̀p'a-ndga* and the goddess *Jaja*.[3] *Jàja*, as imagined by an Abkhaz, is a broad-shouldered woman, of small stature. More than once Abkhasians have seen her wandering about the fields

[1] According to the botanists of the Sukhum Botanical Garden.
[2] It is of interest to elucidate what relation *Jaja* holds to Georgian *jojoba*; see I. Javakhishvili, *A History of the Georgian Nation* (in Georgian), p. 135.
[3] The relation of these two gods is difficult to determine; nor do we know the relation of *Jaja* to *Ayt'ar*.